

Who's your Sugar Daddy?

ONBOARD's resident sage sets off in search of the perfect superyacht owner

Once asked a fellow Captain why it was, that I never seemed to work for a nice owner and he seemed to have nothing but luck when it came to finding good employers. His advice surprised me. He said the perfect owner is "An old, rich, disabled, black, Jewish guy who has divorced his last four rich wives rather well and has since come out of the closet as gay. The same guy has to have waterside homes all over the world, a private long distance jet, a helicopter or two and really love skiing. He should have his own private chef, masseuse and enough chauffeurs to keep his fleet of luxury limousines in good order delivering them wherever in the world he needed them next."

"Jeez," I said, "I didn't know your boss was Jewish or for that matter gay!" "He's not dumbwit! I am telling you what to look for and I reckon that's what the perfect superyacht owner looks like." I was about to protest that no one guy could be all of those things, when the penny dropped! I was in fact, being told that, no matter what, there is a fault in everyone and that there are very few owners (or Captains for that matter) who are absolutely perfect.

It got me thinking about who in the world, I would really like to work for and I began to scrutinise my colleague's wish list more closely. I decided that age, race, religion and sexual orientation had little relevance to my perfect owner choice and I certainly would not wish divorce or disability on anyone, but the rest seemed to fit the bill. There was after all, a certain amount of logic to working for a guy who did not have money worries. I figured that fact would secure crew wages and see enough in the kitty come refit time.

The human factor

Then I realised I, and for that matter my Captain colleague, had forgotten the human element that is so important when it comes to employment. No one wants to work for a jerk, indeed no jerk wants a weird Captain either. There has to be chemistry between



the two. That only comes from a mutual respect for each other. As a Captain, I offer the owner; professionalism, significant and relevant qualifications, loyalty, integrity and servitude. I neither offer nor seek friendship, but in return I look for an owner who is; responsible, understanding, compassionate when needed and honest. He should want to enjoy his yacht and the time he gets to spend on her. He should expect me to take care to ensure he does just that and he should not be worried about the minutia that surrounds the good running of a superyacht on active duty. There can be nothing worse for Captain or crew who work on a yacht that is unloved and doing nothing.

That's what ears are for

There is however, another thing on my wish list. I want an owner who listens, because I believe it is one of the most important of all human attributes. I listen when my crew want to air a grievance, make a suggestion that results in better working practice or comes up with a brilliant idea that improves having fun safely on board the yacht. In just the same way I do not want to work for the guy who hears me predict bad weather prior to his planned departure and use that end-it-all question; "So what?"

Fortunately for my continuing career, I eventually found that perfect owner and the rest was as they say history. Both he and I were happy with what we found in each other and I believe my list of what makes the perfect owner is near on complete. Now I just hope he does not decide to step outside of the closet because I, and my crew, really like his wife as well!